

H wherein the first engagement member is an active ^{*first*} engagement member that is movable, relative to the one of the sole of the snowboard boot or the binding to which the first engagement member is mounted, between a first state wherein the first engagement member does not engage the second engagement member and a second state wherein the first engagement member engages the second engagement member to prevent safety release of the toe area of the boot from the binding during riding, and

H wherein the active ^{*first*} engagement member is automatically movable, in response to the rider stepping out of the binding, from the second state to the first state.

Sub §1 51. (Four Times Amended) A snowboard boot adapted for use with a binding to mount the snowboard boot to a snowboard, the binding including a first engagement member, the snowboard boot comprising:

a sole; and

a second engagement member mounted to the sole to engage the first engagement member;

wherein the second engagement member is an active ^{*second*} engagement member and the first engagement member is a compatible engagement member that is engageable with the active ^{*second*} engagement member, the active ^{*second*} engagement member being movable, relative to the sole, from a first state wherein the active ^{*second*} engagement member does not engage the compatible ^{*first*} engagement member to a second state wherein the active ^{*second*} engagement member engages the compatible ^{*first*} engagement member to prevent safety release of the second engagement member from the first engagement member during riding; and

wherein the second engagement member is adapted to automatically disengage from the first engagement member in response to the snowboard boot stepping out of engagement with the binding.

54 52. (Twice Amended) The snowboard boot of claim *53* 51, wherein the second engagement member is adapted to automatically engage the first engagement member in response to the snowboard boot stepping into the binding, and wherein the second engagement member underlies a toe area of the snowboard boot.

53. (Three Times Amended) The snowboard boot of claim 52, wherein the second engagement member is adapted to prevent release from the first engagement member in response to a lifting force generated at the toe area of the snowboard boot.

54. (Three Times Amended) A non-safety-releasable snowboard binding to mount a snowboard boot to a snowboard, the snowboard boot including a first engagement member, the snowboard binding comprising:

- a base; and
- a second engagement member, mounted to the base, that is adapted to mate with the first engagement member to engage the snowboard boot to the binding, the second engagement member being an active engagement member that is movable relative to the base between a first state wherein the second engagement member does not engage the first engagement member and a second state wherein the second engagement member engages the first engagement member to prevent safety release of the boot from the binding during riding, and wherein the active engagement member is automatically movable, in response to the snowboard boot stepping out of the binding, from the second state to the first state.

61. (Three Times Amended) A non-safety-releasable snowboard binding to mount a snowboard boot to a snowboard, the snowboard boot including a first engagement member, the snowboard binding comprising:

- a base; and
- a second engagement member, mounted to the base, that is adapted to mate with the first engagement member to engage the snowboard boot to the binding, the second engagement member being an active engagement member that is movable relative to the base between a first state wherein the second engagement member does not engage the first engagement member and a second state wherein the second engagement member engages the first engagement member to prevent safety release of the boot from the binding during riding, and wherein the active engagement member is automatically movable, in response to the snowboard boot stepping out of the binding, from the second state to the first state.